The Truth About Plane Losses Over North Vietnam, P. 2

Still Only Two Senators Willing To Speak Up

"If there is such a thing as a civil war within a civil war, it surely is transpiring today in South Vietnam."
—*Morse* (D., Oregon) *on the Senate floor, April 5*

"Nothing could more completely reveal the falsity, the farcicality, the feebleness and the bankruptcy of the Administration's policy in Southeast Asia than what is happening in South Vietnam."
—*Gruening* (D., Alaska) *on the Senate floor, April 5*

I. F. Stone's Weekly

VOL. XIV, NO. 14 APRIL 11, 1966 WASHINGTON, D. C. 15 CENTS

What the Vietnamese People Resent

What are ordinary Vietnamese people thinking? U.S. press dispatches provide no clue to man-in-the-street reactions. They carry amazingly little even on the rebel elements, who they are and what they want. The faces of the demonstrators, faces distorted by fury and exaltation, appear for a fitful moment on our TV screens. We can see their crudely lettered banners. But on the whole, our press—like our war effort—tends to treat the Vietnamese people as irrelevant. I have seen few interviews with Buddhist or student leaders. Stray bits and pieces of what they and their banners say can be gleaned from the news dispatches. But mostly the press seems to look on, uncomprehendingly, from behind the barred windows of the Caravelle and the Continental hotels in Saigon, like tourists gaping at a spectacle. We get not so much what the discontented are saying, as how this is interpreted by the U.S. intelligence men with whom the reporters are in contact. These interpretations tend to be as distorted as the cop's view is everywhere, whether a Southern Sheriff's of a civil rights demonstration or J. Edgar Hoover's of the student peace movement. The common characteristic is to overlook the obvious grievance and search for some diabolic conspiracy.

Most Ancient of Such Complaints

If you read the dispatches closely and with sympathetic eye you can feel the anguish of the Vietnamese people. American GI's "have turned our women into prostitutes and bar girls" UPI quoted an unnamed speaker at a Buddhist student rally in Saigon (*Wash. Daily News,* March 31). This is the oldest and truest complaint about occupation troops from time immemorial. Another speaker at the same rally charged that his homeland was being used as "a testing ground for weapons of foreign countries." You only have to skim through *Aviation Week* or the latest military appropriations hearings to see that Vietnam, like Spain a generation ago, is being used as a huge proving ground, with the Vietnamese people as the guinea pigs. We seem to find it strange that they can speak, and unlike the mice and rabbits in our laboratories cry out against their vivisection. A third, equally natural and justifiable complaint, was made by the Buddhist newspaper, *Fatherland.* Walter Friedenberg of Scripps-Howard, reported from Saigon (*Wash. Daily News,* March 22) it had protested that " 'the arrival of more than 200,000 foreign troops has upset the life of the population'," bringing inflation and plunging the populace into misery." There must be broad strata of the uncommitted urban population which feel that the American cure is worse than the Communist disease.

General In A Dream World

Mr. DOWNS (ABC News): Gen. Greene, the Marines, and you yourself, have been very proud of civic action and the pacification program, the Marines working with the civilians in South Vietnam. How come you haven't been able to pacify Danang?

Gen. GREENE (Commandant, U.S. Marines): Well, I feel that Danang is pacified. . . .

Mr. DOWNS: . . . We put in planes and B-52 bombers, we defoliate their agricultural lands sometimes, we kill civilians though we don't want to. . . . How can they like us? How can we pacify them?

Gen. GREENE: Of course this is a problem we have to face in any campaign. . . .

Mr. DOWNS: Aren't you talking about a sort of occupation? Is that what it is going to come to?

Gen. GREENE: It is not an occupation in any sense of the word because we have no selfish aims of our own in there and the people realize this. . . . The longer we stay there the more the people understand this.

—*ABC-TV Issues and Answers, April 3*

All the clichés we claim to be defending in South Vietnam fill our people with alarm when we are asked to put them into practice. Nothing seems to be so suspect as the demand for self-government. "Some of the shouts by Buddhist demonstrators," we are warned by Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, always alert to Communist conspiracy (*New York Herald-Tribune,* April 5), "are straight out of the Viet Cong slogan book." They even cited one "high-ranking official" who believes the Buddhist demonstrations are part of a world-wide strategy timed with the peace rallies of March 27! The main speaker at the Buddhist rally in Saigon that day sounded more like an echo of 1776 than of 1917. "This government is not a government of the people," the Rev. Thien Minh, head of Buddhist youth affairs complained (AP from Saigon in *Washington Star,* March 27). "We are not free to act, no interests guaranteed. They want to put in jail anybody they want, to execute anybody they want. All the political groups are paralyzed." Even the two extreme right-wing parties, the Dai Viet and the NQQVD, which were allowed to operate for a time after Diem fell, have disappeared. Two of the banners carried by the Buddhist boy scouts in the April 1 demonstrations were "Down With the American Attempt of Objecting to the Forming of A Vietnamese Assembly" and

(Continued on Page Four)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hiding Heavy Toll in Planes and Pilots Because The Bombings Are Uneconomic?

Time the Pentagon Told the Truth About Air Losses Over North Vietnam

We found our anti-brass hat hackles rising when we read in Secretary of the Air Force Harold Brown's statement to the Senate Armed Services and Appropriations committees March 31 that while the number of strike sorties flown each month over Vietnam "is about the same as at the peak of the Korean war," the "overall aircraft loss in Southeast Asia, including action in both North and South Vietnam, is slightly lower than it was in Korea." This struck us as another of those Pentagon efforts to hide the fact that our losses over North Vietnam are running far higher than in Korea.

The Tricky Language of A Shyster Lawyer

The Brown statement has to be studied as one would the words of a shyster lawyer. Notice first that he spoke of "overall" loss and secondly that the "overall" included not just North and South Vietnam but all of Southeast Asia. The guerrillas in South Vietnam have little anti-aircraft and there are other areas, as in Laos and Thailand, where even less is encountered. By lumping losses elsewhere in Southeast Asia with North Vietnam, the high rate in the North can be hidden.

Just how high the rate is may be uncovered with a little study and patience, despite Pentagon censorship of these hearings. At page 338 of the supplemental Vietnam budget hearings held last January by these two Senate committees, Secretary McNamara under questioning by Young of Ohio said we had lost 190 planes over North Vietnam, though this figure included "aircraft destroyed other than through *direct* hostile action" (our emphasis). He did not explain what he meant by "direct" hostile action but added "the number of aircraft shot down is on the order I think of 135. . . ." (There must be something disingenuous in the wording because several days earlier in the same hearings (p. 118) McNamara said we had lost 179 planes, 11 to surface-to-air missiles, and 168 to anti-aircraft fire.) Even using the lower figure of 135, the loss ratio is startling. McNamara did not give the loss ratio but this can now be estimated if we turn back to Air Secretary Brown's latest statement and notice that he said we had flown "more than 10,000 strike sorties" over North Vietnam. This would give us a ratio of about 13.5 planes lost per 1,000 sorties or almost four times the Korean rate, which was 3.5 per 1,000.

One reason for hiding these figures, we suspect, is because the bombing of North Vietnam is highly uneconomic. McNamara, under questioning by Young, said only about half the crews shot down were recovered and that the cost of the aircraft lost ran between $300 and $350 millions. Senator Symington at the same hearings questioned the value of the bombings and spoke of one bridge which had been attacked unsuccessfully five times; two-thirds of the pilots shot down were lost. Symington asked Air Force Chief of Staff McConnell to furnish the committee "the cost of the airplanes in question and the estimated costs, aside from the tragedy of the loss of life, the estimated loss in training of the pilot. . . ." The information was furnished but classified.

Symington commented that on a recent trip to Vietnam certain people told him (closer identification was deleted by the censor) "We don't see why we have to waste men and planes, multi-million dollar planes, trying to knock out barracks, buses or even ox-carts as targets." General McConnell (p. 326) admitted it was "not a very economical use of airpower to do that kind of bombing. But with the intelligence that we get on an operation such as you have described, if they tell us that there is a target there, then I think it is essential that we go and try to get it." Then the General added, "Now, naturally, there will be times when there won't be anything there at all, but I believe that we will have to continue that kind of bombing." Is this rational strategy or the mindless momentum of a huge military machine?

NBC Blacks Out LBJ's Credibility Gap

On Friday, April 1, NBC took a quarter page ad in the New York Times to announce an hour TV-cast that night on Vietnam: The Home Front. A main feature of the show was to be an analysis, "How do Americans really feel about the war in Vietnam?" NBC hired National Analysts, Inc., of Philadelphia, to conduct a poll and an advance press release was sent out. But that night the poll was not used, and NBC has since refused to let us see the results or even the press release. Fortunately the main results were published by the Washington Post Saturday, April 2. The poll showed 62.4% satisfied with how the President was handling the situation, and 70.7% thought he was "doing enough to achieve peace." 75.3% also thought the problem should be handled by the UN. The unpalatable result for the White House came in response to a key question: 59.6% said "No" and only 21.8% said "Yes" when asked "Has the White House been giving us all the truth about Vietnam?" Some here in Washington are wondering whether ex-NBC executive Robert Kintner's first White House chore was keeping that off the TV screens. NBC spokesmen said the decision to cut was "intra-mural." "We did spend a good deal of money . . . in excess of $15,000 (on the poll)," the show's producer Chet Hagen told the Washington Post (April 3). "I understand they're talking now of trying to fit it into some other show."

This Should Be Good for a Few Guffaws in Brazil, the Dominican Republic and Guatemala

"Change is a traditional feature of Latin American politics, and in recent years it has been the military establishment which in many instances has provided the greatest stabilizing factor for orderly change and continuity of constitutional government."

—Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Wheeler before House Foreign Affairs on military assistance March 30.

"Our major objective in Latin America is economic and social development. . . . There are groups which oppose change simply because they wish to preserve the benefits they derive from maintenance of the status quo. There are also those groups which see a chance to seize power in the atmosphere of dissatisfaction and unrest. . . . It is for this reason that our Military Assistance Program for Latin America continues to be oriented toward internal security . . . not directed at eliminating protest or enforcing conformity but rather at helping provide an environment in which economic and social tasks can be effectively pursued."

—Secretary McNamara same committee, same day

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Adam Clayton Powell Finally Produces—But Will He Deliver?

A 10-Point Poverty Program Which Begins to Measure Up to Need

By Adam Clayton Powell*

The Federal Crusade Against Poverty is too small with too few dollars to help so many. While America spends uncountable billions of dollars to pursue a victoryless war on foreign soil, we are shortchanging our own citizens with a heartless stinginess that bars them from a triumph over their own war on poverty.

Powell's 10 Point Plan

It is from these destitute brothers and sisters that I seek support for this 10 point program: I shall amend the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 to provide $7 billion for anti-poverty programs this year. Several distinguished economists and authorities on poverty have indicated that $7 billion is the minimum to make the barest impact on poverty in America. Based on this $7 billion budget I shall seek to expand the community action programs of this country by *doubling* the money allocated for them. I wish to emphasize that this strengthening of CAPs will in no way detract from the main thrust of the 1966 amendments—job creation and on the job training. To prevent local officials from emasculating the anti-poverty programs to preserve their selfish political interests, I shall offer an amendment that unequivocably bars any use of the veto power over any CAPs by any Mayor, city council or local governing body. To insure the development of independent anti-poverty programs, I have introduced an amendment that requires that 40% of all money allocated by OEO go to independent programs or programs which are not a component of or controlled by existing community-wide or "umbrella" agencies. A new section to Title II will be added to specifically provide for the funding of a Narcotics Rehabilitation and Prevention program. Five million dollars will be allocated for this section.

I shall offer with particular pleasure an amendment that completely abrogates OEO's administrative right to prescribe any kind of loyalty or security tests based upon any set of spuriously collected files in a Federal, state or local agency. I intend to offer an amendment to the minimum wage bill on the House floor that raises the minimum wage to $1.75 in 1969 and to $2.00 in 1970. I shall also introduce legislation reducing the 40 hour work week in a gradual declension to 32 hours a week over the next six years. Because poverty is a direct function of educational attainment and by definition, the quality of education, I shall begin cross country hearings in Northern ghettoes to gather legislative information for the de facto school segregation bill I introduced February 24.

This country cannot long continue to raise the hopes of the impoverished masses, particularly deprived black families, and not expect violent repercussions when we fail to fulfill their expectations. Time is running out in America as it is in Vietnam.

*At a poorly reported press conference March 30.

Poor Showcase For Democracy

Far be it from us to disturb the romantic euphoria of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's visit to Washington. But in all objectivity it should be noted that Asia's biggest "bulwark of democracy" has a very poor record indeed when compared to its, and our, rival Communist China. China managed to emerge from terrible years of drought by its own efforts, without either U.S. or Russian aid. Strict rationing prevented famine. Peking has been able to run a small foreign aid program of its own, to make the atomic bomb and to achieve considerable development. In the present Indian food crisis, as in every one we can remember back to that in World War II, a major factor has been the inability of the Indians to curb their own speculators and hoarders. Behind the facade of democracy in India there operates an Oriental capitalist class of merchants and usurers quite content with the human misery and squalor from which it profits. It's a delusion to think this archaic, badly organized and decayed society can provide a showcase for democracy in Asia. On the contrary it can only discredit democracy in the eyes of a new generation impatient with old evils and permanent hunger.

A First Amendment Victory Which Is Still A Long Way From Jeffersonianism

We hope the Supreme Court's decision in the DeGregory case will finally end the 12 years of political persecution to which Hugh DeGregory has been subjected by the State of New Hampshire. Back in 1940, DeGregory ran for Lt. Governor of Massachusetts on the Communist party ticket. Later he moved to New Hampshire where his past made him fair game when Louis Wyman, its Attorney General and a pillar of the China Lobby, launched a witch hunt in the early 50s. In the first DeGregory case to reach the Supreme Court, DeGregory had refused to answer questions on the ground that the immunity offered him was from State prosecution only. With Warren, Black and Douglas noting their dissent, the Court dismissed the appeal in 1959. Wyman, for some reason, dropped the proceeding and started a new one. When this reached the Supreme Court in 1961, judgment against DeGregory was affirmed per curiam with Warren, Black, Douglas and Brennan noting dissent. This time DeGregory said under oath that he was "not now" a member of the Communist party and indeed had not even been aware of the existence of any Communist Party in New Hampshire in the six and a half years since the law under which he was being questioned had been enacted. A State judge thereupon declared him purged of contempt, and a new Attorney General then began a third proceeding. This was an attempt to get answers from DeGregory on his knowledge of Communist activities prior to 1957. He refused to answer on First Amendment grounds and was sentenced to one year in jail. This time Clark and Fortas joined the four dissenters of 1961 and set him free. "The present record," the Court said, "is devoid of any evidence that there is any Communist movement in New Hampshire . . . New Hampshire's interest on this record is too remote and conjectural to override the guarantee of the First Amendment. " Grateful as we are for this long overdue decision, it is still a long way from free society standards. It implies the witch hunt would be valid despite the First Amendment if there were evidence of Communist party activities. But DeGregory and his lawyer, Howard S. Whiteside of Boston are to be congratulated on a victory which to some extent affirms the First Amendment.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We May Widen The War Rather Than Risk A Neutralist Regime

(Continued from Page One)

"Fundamental Institutions for A True Democracy Must Be Established Soon." We wonder whether Evans and Novak can find these in their Viet Cong slogan book. The most touching news out of that demonstration was the call for a "Self-Respect Week," urging children to stop asking Americans for money (*Wash. Post.*, April 2). Maybe all this is a subtle Communist plot. It could conceivably be the reaction of an outraged nationalism, seeking the restoration of dignity and the achievement of freedom from military dictatorship.

Distrusted Allies

We fear the people we claim to be defending. A significant detail was reported in passing by Richard Critchfield in the *Washington Star* April 5 during the height of the Saigon demonstrations. "Tribal mercenaries," he cabled, "ringed the American Embassy." We didn't even trust Ky's troops, we had to fall back on non-Vietnamese hirelings to protect our Embassy. Marshall Ky may be a bit of a clown but his instinct seems to have been better than that of the American Embassy; apparently he had been urged by the Embassy to get tough with the demonstrations but at first held back "for fear of creating martyrs." This explains why we could hardly refuse him the use of U.S. transports and the U.S. air base at Danang when Ky finally set out to conquer the rebellious North and shoot the Mayor of Danang. (Ky seems to think all problems can be solved by shooting somebody.) In the wake of his inglorious backdown, it should not escape attention that our troops were all ready to take part in this civil war within a civil war. "Thousands of U.S. Marines and loyal Vietnamese troops," the AP reported from Danang (*Baltimore Sun*, April 6) "were aligned in combat readiness." The Vietnamese commanders seem to have had better sense than their American advisers. Ambassador Lodge and President Johnson were ready to back Ky to the last.

An index of how far we are divorced from political realities was provided by a UPI interview with the Rev. Hoang Quynh, chairman of the Catholic Greater Unity Force. Father Quynh is the all-out anti-Communist who played a key role in overturning the civilian government of Dr. Quat last June and bringing to power the Ky dictatorship. He told the UPI (*Wash. Post*, March 27) that Ky's rule was worse than Diem's. "There are so many things wrong with the government," Father Quynh told the UPI, "it is very difficult to know where to begin to criticize it." This is the regime we were prepared to—and may yet—support with military force. This is the regime we have been selling to curselves as one which could bring about social and economic reform. Our South Vietnamese policy continues to be an exercise in resolute self-delusion.

Insofar as it is possible to see from a distance, the Buddhist majority may well fear that if the U.S. should go to the negotiating table, there will be no organized political force on the non-Communist side. Free elections in the area under our control, a representative and legitimate government, would make possible negotiations with the NLF on some basis of equality. In Burma and Ceylon the Buddhists have erected viable neutralist regimes enjoying friendly relations with China. They may hope for something similar in South Vietnam. What the U.S. fears is that any popular regime in our area will opt for a negotiated peace and a neutralist solution. This would end the torment of the Vietnamese people but we would see it as a political defeat. Rather than accept it, we may widen the war.

Noon, April 6

Practically Indistinguishable From Christians

"Mindful of the violence that accompanied the mainly Buddhist demonstrations that led to the fall of Diem's regime and his assassination in 1963, the specialists here [in Washington] were not disposed to express surprise about reports of 'sticks and steel spikes' being carried today by demonstrators who marched from a Buddhist institute to Saigon's center. There were, however, some ironic comments on the contrast between such behavior by ostensible Buddhists and the basic tenets of Buddhism, including in particular its 'harm no living creature'."

—Paul Ward in the Baltimore Sun, April 3

Reminds us of that other pacifist sect which is taught to "love thine enemy" and does it with napalm.

Index for 1965 Ready — Send Stamped Addressed Envelope — Renew Your Sub and Send A Gift Sub at the Same Time

I. F. Stone's Weekly 5618 Nebraska Ave., N. W. Washington, D. C. 20015

Please renew (or enter) a sub for the enclosed $5:

Name .....

Street .....

City .....**Zone**.....**State**.....

4/11/66

For the enclosed $5 send a gift sub to:

(To) Name .....

Street .....

City .....**Zone**.....**State**.....

For $5.35 extra send I. F. Stone's *The Haunted Fifties*

Indicate if announcement wished ☐

I. F. Stone's Weekly
5618 Nebraska Ave., N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20015

Second class postage paid at Washington, D. C.

NEWSPAPER

I. F. Stone's Weekly. Second Class Postage Paid at Washington, D. C. Published every Monday except in August, the last week in December and the first week in January and Bi-Weekly during July at 5618 Nebraska Ave., N.W., Washington, D. C. An independent weekly published and edited by I. F. Stone; Circulation Manager, Esther M. Stone. Subscription: $5 in the U.S.; $6 in Canada; $10 elsewhere. Air Mail rates: $15 to Europe; $20 to Israel, Asia and Africa.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED